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VI.

SOME PLAUTINE WORDS AND WORD-GROUPS.

BY A. A. BRYANT.

I. OPERAE-PRETIVM.

As English "worth-while" is an adjective word-group, so in Plautus and Terence *operae-pretium* is a noun word-group, always in this order, never separated by another word, and showing the metrical ictus on the same syllable as that on which a single word of this form would have it:

A. ⁽¹⁾Operae-prétium (cf. flagítium, Plaut. Asin. 473, etc.), as, e.g. in Plaut. Most. 842; Ter. Andr. 217, etc.

B. Operaé-pretium (cf. flágitium, Plaut. Poen. 609, etc.) as, e.g. Plaut. Mil. 31; Cas. 879; Poen. 1174, etc.

Through not recognizing this latter accentuation some editors have wrongly altered the MS. reading in Plaut. Amph. 151: "adeste: erit operae-pretium híc spectantibús" (*inspectantibus*, C. F. Mueller).

The phrase occurs seven times in Republican dramatists, viz. Plaut. Amph. 151; Cas. 879; Mil. 31; Poen. 1174; Most. 842; Rud. 947; Ter. Andr. 217.

II. PHILIPPVS.

This word (in Greek Φίλιππος) would normally become *Philíppus* in Latin, but in plebeian Latin the (stress) accent would be put on the same syllable as the Greek (pitch) accent at the expense of the quantity of the second syllable (Lindsay, *Latin Language*, chap. iii, § 3). In Plautus it appears thirty-five times as substantive or adjective, to indicate the coin of Philip, and always with a short penult, — *Philíppus*, *Philíppeus*. The personal name, on the contrary, occurs four times with normal accentuation, — *Philíppus*, *Philíppa*. (In Persa 339 scan, "regi'-Philíppi caussa," as a word-group, like ⁽¹⁾*propter-amórem*; cf. Klotz *Grundzüge*, p. 307. That a phrase like *rex Philíppus* formed a word-group in Latin is shown by Asmus *de Appositionis apud Plautum et Terentium collocatione*, Halle, 1891, p. 47.) English "há'-penny," originally "half-pénny," — an accent

still retained in American “half-dóllar,” — is like Latin *Philippus*, a vulgar pronunciation which has forced its way into the literary language.

The word occurs as the name of a coin: Plaut. Bacch. 220, 230, 272, 590, 868, 879, 882, 919, 934, 969, 997, 1011, 1026, 1050, 1183; Asin. 153; Curc. 440; Mil. 1061, 1064; Poen. 166, 415, 558, 598, 670, 714, 732, 771, 781, 1363; Rud. 1314; Trin. 152, 955, 959, 965, 1158. And as a personal name: Plaut. Aul. 86, 704; Epid. 636; Pers. 339. (In Truc. 952, probably the name of the coin, but the text is too corrupt to be certain. The word does not occur in Terence or in the Scaen. Frag.)

III. QUID-OPVST-VERBIS? QVID-VERBIS OPVST?

This phrase occurs twenty-four times in Plautus and Terence, — fifteen times at the beginning or in the middle of the verse and nine times at the end. In the nine cases where it ends the verse it has the metrical accentuation, *quíd verbis opúst*, and this accentuation is found only at the end of the verse. In twelve of the fifteen lines where the phrase is in the body of the verse it has the form *quíd opust vérbis?* and this we may conclude to be the normal form, the other being adopted only metri gratia.

The three exceptions are: Plaut. Bacch. 1164, “quia flágitíumst. — Quid opúst verbís? meo filio nóñ sum irátus”; Ter. Andr. 99, “quid vérbis ópus est? hác fama ímpulsús Chremés”; Plaut. Merc. 106, “quid vérbis ópus est? émi | átque advéxi herí.”

The first variation may be charged to the vagaries of anapaestic verse. The other two I should be inclined to emend, especially as the Mercator line also contains a very objectionable hiatus; and B, one of the best MSS., reads, “opus verbis,” and not “verbis opust.” Read then: “⟨sed⟩ quíd opust vérbis? émi eam átque advéxi héri” (eam *om. MSS., add. Bentleyus*).

In the same way the Andria passage on the model of Andr. 165, I should be inclined to read: “⟨sed⟩ quíd opust vérbis? hac fama ímpulsus Chremes . . .” although the consensus of the MSS. makes this emendation more doubtful. The phrase occurs: Plaut. Amph. 445, 615, 777; Aul. 468 [472]; Bacch. 483 [486], 1164; Capt. 937;

Cist. 94; Curc. 79; Merc. 106; Mil. 1213; Most. 993; Poen. 113, 436, 579; Rud. 85, 135, 590; Truc. 553; Ter. Andr. 99, 165; Phorm. 75, 100.

IV. OBSEURO.

This word is used in Plautus and the other Republican dramatists (except Terence, for whom exact statistics are not at hand¹) as follows:

(1) Parenthetically, with or without object, 167 times:—in questions 78 times alone, 7 times in the word-group *obseuro hercle*, and 2 times in the group *obseuro ecator*; in requests, mild commands, appeals, etc., 46 times alone, 25 times as *obseuro hercle*; in exclamations, oratorical questions, etc., 3 times alone and 2 times as *obseuro hercle*; and finally as an ejaculation, 3 times alone and once in the word-group. In this parenthetical use, where it does not influence the construction, *obseuro* was accented, or received the stress of the voice, sometimes on the final syllable, to judge from Plaut. Bacch. 1130: “vidén’ limulís, opsecró, ut intuéntur?”

The major ictus of the measure (first foot in trochaics, second in iambs) is about equally divided between the first and the last syllables of the word, much as the accent in the modern expletive is apt to shift under varying conditions. Cf. “For-Héaven’s-sake” and “For-Heaven’s-sáke.”

Occasionally, when preceded by an interrogative or other emphatic monosyllable, the word sinks entirely into subordination. So in Asin. 473: “flagitium hóminis, dá õbseuro árgentum huic, ne mále loquatur,” where we must leave prosodiacal hiatus between “da” and “obseuro.” So Aul. 733: “quó õbseuro pacto ésse possum? quía istuc facinus quód tuom,” etc. Curc. 308 (with emphatic *te*): “éloquere, obseuro hércle. — Eloquere, té õbseuro, ubi súnt meae?” (For the hiatus before *ubi*, cf. Bacch. 1130, quoted above.) Rud. 657: “Túrbalio, Sparáx, ubi estis? — I õbseuro intro, súbveni.” [So in an oblique form in Mil. 542: “perque tua génua. — Quid õpsecrás me? — Inscétiáe.”] Such shortening is of course very natural in any

¹ See Lindskog, *Quaestiones de Parataxi et Hypotaxi apud priscos Latinos* (Lund, 1896), p. 7.

language of stress accent. (On the supposed scansion *obsecrō*, see above, p. 116.)

In this parenthetical use further *obsecro* seems to have been originally post-positive, — occurring, that is, after one or more words of its clause or at the end of it. So we have it 115 times as against 50 where it comes before. The position before its clause marks the progression from parenthesis to parataxis, — a step quickly followed by the further one leading to hypotaxis, or complete subordination (cf. Lindskog *l. c.*).

Obsecrō te and *te obsecro* (the latter usually at end of verse or hemistich¹) are used indifferently for the simple *obsecro*, as “pritheē” and “pray” might with us be interchanged.

Obsecro hercle and (twice) *obsecro ēcastōr* occur always in this order, and are not differentiated from the simple verb. So the correct reading in Plaut. *Most.* 557 = 549^c is: “cape, obsecro hercle,” etc., and not “hercle obsecro,” as some MSS. read.

Other lines in which the phrase occurs, and which may be emended, are, *Merc.* 988, where we may keep the MS. order by suppressing the final *e* of *hercle*: “iam obsecro hercl’ vobis habēte cum porcīs cum fiscinā” (cf. Skutsch, *Forschungen*, i, 148 sqq.), and *Pseud.* 129, where we should read with some editors: “st! Tace obsecro hercle. — Quid negōtist? — Ostiūm,” etc., making *st* an ἐπιφώνημα and rejecting A.’s reading: *hercle obsecro*.

(2) We come now to the use of *obsecro* in grammatical relation to the rest of the sentence. With a personal object we have already noted its appearance under (1). The number of occurrences in this parenthetical use is 44. In 28 cases of the remaining 31 the verb governs an “ut” clause in addition to the personal object. In 4 lines only does there seem to be an “ut” clause following *obsecro* with object omitted. *Amph.* 388: “óbsecro ut per pácem liceat te álloqui ut ne vápulem.” *Merc.* 1001: “óbsecro, Satis iam ut habeátis. . . .” *Stich.* 299: “advorsum véniat, opsecrét se ut nuntio hóc impertiám,” and *Truc.* 592: “átque ut huc veniat óbsecra. Illicet.”

¹ The only exception to this rule is *Curc.* 308, where the *te* is put first as very emphatic. This would seem to show that *obsecrō te* was the normal order, the other being resorted to only under metrical necessity.

The Mercator passage may, perhaps, be regarded as parataxis; the Stichus line might be emended by introducing *me* before *opsecret*; but I do not see how we can get round the other two instances. They may serve to "prove the rule" that the dividing line between parataxis and syntaxis with *obsecro* is the presence or omission of the personal object.

The verb also (2) governs a cognate accusative in addition to a personal object, as in Plaut. Mil. 542: "... quid opsecrās me?" and (3) is used intransitively in a neuter sense, as in Plaut. Mil. 1240: "... genua amplectar Atque obsecrabo." *Ibid.* 1396: "... nequiquam hercle óbsecras," — "Your prayer is in vain," etc.

It remains to consider a pair of corrupt passages in which *obsecro* is involved.

Merc. 892. The trouble does not seem to be where Goetz and Schöll put the obelus. I propose: "óbsecro te, lóquere ubi sit, <éloquere> ubi eam víderis." The shift in accent, *ubī, ubĩ*, is thoroughly Plautine, while the omission of the second *eloquere* is palaeographically very easy.

Rud. 253, a. This line stands at the end of a long cretic passage. It is followed by an iambic senarius, an iambic octonarius, and two trochaic tetrameters catalectic. I should read:

253, a. "séd quid hóc óbsecróst? Quid? Vidén', amábo;

253, b. fanum [videsne] hoc? Vbíst? Ad dexterám."

253, a. cretic dimeter acatalectic with ithyphallic (cf. Cas. 147, 149; Pseud. 1248, etc.).

253, b. iambic dimeter acatalectic. (For the collocation of the dimeter with senarii and octonarii, cf. Capt. 197; Cas. 708-9, etc.)